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ABSTRACT

Vision has been identified as a critical factor in effective leadership. Communicating the leader's vision to the staff is essential to realizing the vision. This paper reports data regarding seven elementary principals who developed a vision for their schools during attendance at a Principals' Academy. Data were also obtained from follow-up interviews with the principals and a survey of their teachers. Principals completed a profile instrument and developed a school improvement plan during the academy. During the interview, principals were asked to restate their visions and list the strategies used to communicate their visions to their staffs. Teachers were asked to state their principals' visions and list the strategies they believed the principals were using to communicate the visions to them. Responses at each site were compared for congruence. Summary data are compared across cases to identify commonalities that resulted in more effective communication of vision. Implications for professional practice and administrator training are discussed. Appended are 13 references. (Author)

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VISION: Communicating it to the Staff

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VISION: Communicating it to the Staff

Abstract

Vision has been identified as a critical factor in effective leadership. Communicating the leader's vision to the staff is essential to realizing the vision. This paper reports data regarding seven elementary principals who developed a vision for their schools during attendance at a Principals' Academy. The data are also from a follow-up interview with the principals and a survey of their teachers. Principals completed a profile instrument and developed a school improvement plan during the Academy. During the interview, principals were asked to restate their visions and list the strategies used to communicate their visions to their staffs. Teachers were asked to state their principals' visions and list the strategies they believed the principals were using to communicate the visions to them. Responses at each site were compared for congruence. Summary data are compared across cases to identify commonalities which resulted in more effective communication of vision. Implications for professional practice and administrator training are discussed.

Sheive and Schoenheit (1987), define vision as "a blueprint of a desired state or an image of a preferred condition that we work to achieve in the future" (p. 94). Peterson (1986) sees vision as the "beliefs concerning what the ideal state of the organization is or what ought to be achieved" (p. 87). Others have described it as a "mental journey from the known to unknown" (Hickman & Silva, 1984, p. 151). Manasse (1986) has stated that common to various conceptions of vision is "some comprehensive but personal picture of desired future that a leader conveys to members of his or her organization. Once the organizational members 'buy into' the vision they join the leader into turning their shared vision into reality" (p. 151).

Manasse (1986) has identified four types of vision required by administrators: organizational vision, future vision, personal vision and strategic vision. She expresses the relationship among them as

> "strategic vision involves connecting the reality of the present (organizational vision) to possibilities of the future (future vision) in a unique way (personal vision) that is appropriate for the organization and its leader." (p. 162).

Background

The term **vision** is a recent phenomenon in leadership studies. It has appeared as a key factor in the success of executives, both in business and in education. Bennis and Nanus (1985), in a study of 90 successful leaders, identified four components which these leaders seemed to share. The first two are "attention to vision" and "meaning through communication." "Attention to vision" is demonstrated by identifying and creating a focus. "Meaning through communication" refers to the strategies and languages used in communication which create meaning.

Stevens and Marsh (1987) have found that a proactive approach is a critical component of effective principal behavior and one of the preconditions of proactive behavior is vision. Principals who have a vision can design and implement a plan to achieve the vision.

Other researchers have noted that vision and the ability to articulate it is an important characteristic of effective leaders. Rutherford (1985), reporting on a study which focused on the characteristics of more-effective and less-effective principals, found that vision was a important feature of the former. Effective principals could describe their visions. Less-effective principals had "no vision for their schools; they focused on maintaining tranquility in the here and now" (p. 32). Principals who are focused on the present have less time to plan for the future. Principals with vision are able to set priorities so that organizational maintenance does not become their sole preoccupation. (Bredeson, 1985; Manasse, 1986). Dwyer (1984) feels that principals with vision and initiative can accomplish great improvements in their schools. According to Greenfield (1986), the vision of the principal serves as a guide as s/he "sets about the activities of

managing and leading a school" and that principals are then able "to articulate a coherent and compelling vision to others regarding school purposes and activities."

In a study of leaders in New York, Sheive and Schoenheit (1987) found that five themes "help to explain how educational leaders develop and actualize their visions" (p. 99). The themes are to see the vision or value it, to reflect whereby leaders own the vision, to articulate their vision by making the private vision public, to plan or develop strategies and to mobilize people through action. Leaders who have reached this step "get things done."

Greenfield (1986) has argued that evolving a vision requires moral imagination and articulating the vision involves interpersonal competence both of which he believes are not components of administrative training. Moral imagination according to Greenfield, refers to the ability to see the discrepancy between how things are and how they might be and apply a standard of goodness that illuminates the discrepancy between the present and what is possible, and better. Standard of goodness reflects an individual's value system and in an organization where members differ in values, conflicting standards of goodness will be present. Therefore, he believes that principals must also have interpersonal competence which he defines as the "ability to elicit desired task responses from another. It refers to the knowledge and skills needed to influence teacher and others in the desired direction" (p. 18). The challenge is to develop a working consensus among teachers as to what the situation is and what needs to be done.

The vision must be communicated to the staff to develop this consensus. Newburg and Glatthorn (1982) have cited slogans as one method used by principals to provide focus. In

one school, they noted that the slogan was supported by explicit policies. Greenfield (1986) believes that principals rely on symbols and persuasion in addition to interpersonal competence. Metaphors and personal behavior have been noted as strategies by other researchers (Bredeson, 1985; Manasse, 1986). Manasse says that principals model their vision through their actions and that strategic vision allows leaders to make on the spot decisions that are consistent so that the message from their actions supports the message in their words. She concludes that with these strategies and given time, teachers will begin to see the underlying rationale.

Dwyer (1984) has advocated communicating vision to staff in small steps and with attention to the dailiness of the improvement effort. However, he believes that it is not clear just how principals translate between vision and dailiness and how activities mesh with an overall vision or plan.

Most of the current research on developing and communicating vision has focused on the principal and describes what s/he wants to do, what s/he is doing and what s/he says s/he is doing. Little, if any, attention has been focused on the receivers of all this "doing", the teachers. If principals say they are articulating their visions to the staff, are the teachers perceiving the communication? Do teachers know their principal's vision? Furthermore, can they identify the strategies employed by the principals to communicate the vision? Are some strategies more effective than others? This paper examines principals' visions, strategies for communicating visions and the perceptions of their staffs concerning these factors.

Methodology

Seven female, elementary principals were selected from attendees at the 1987 Arizona Principals' Academy to participate in follow-up case studies of the implementation of their school improvement plans. Each plan had been developed with a vision statement and strategies to articulate the vision to the staff. During the fall and winter of school year 1987-88, the principals were interviewed and the teachers were surveyed regarding the plans. During the interview each principal was asked to restate her vision on a 3x5 card. They were then asked to identify the strategies they had employed to communicate their visions to the staff. Finally, a general conversation was held concerning the unique features of their schools.

Teachers from each school were surveyed in a group. A brief explanation of the content of the Principals' Academy was given and the term vision was explained as it related to the school situation. In addition, a short definition of vision was included in the instructions on the response sheet. Teachers were asked to state their principal's vision in one or two sentences. In the remaining space they were to indicate the strategies used by the principal that had made them cognizant of her vision. The other components of the survey will not be discussed in this paper.

Data from the interviews and surveys were used in conjunction with documents prepared for the Academy. These data were analyzed using procedures for analysis of qualitative data suggested in Miles and Huberman (1984). The components of the June vision statements were identified for each principal. The components of the vision statement written during each interview were also identified and compared with the original

statement to determine constancy of vision. The components of the statements of each teacher were identified and placed in a matrix for comparison with the components of their principal's second vision. Numbers of teachers who identified each component were tabulated and percentages computed for each principal. Responses of each teacher were then arrayed to determine who had identified no components, one component, etc. Percentages were found for numbers of components identified by each staff.

The strategies identified by each principal were categorized and staff responses were matched within each category. Numbers of responses within each category were tabulated and arrayed in a matrix. Numbers of responses were compared between categories and across cases. Responses were also compared with principal responses to note congruence.

Findings

During the Principals' Academy in June, each of the seven principals had written a vision statement. The statements were analyzed to determine segments or components which could be considered independently. The visions were found to have two to five components. A colleague examined the vision statements and validated the component selection. The majority of the components had a noun or verb with a modifier, e.g., happy staff or learn cooperatively.

Stevens and Marsh (1987) found that vision specificity varied according to the style of the principal. Although principal style was not examined in these cases, there were

differences in specificity in the visions. None of the principals listed a specific program, but some named specific groups such as parents, or students and some named ideas such as "teaching strategies" or "learning through cooperation." Most of the visions could be said to be future oriented and in some respects, difficult to fully achieve and maintain. One was more short-term and focused on a portion of what might be called the "big picture."

Principals were interviewed in October, January, and February. At the beginning of the interview, the principal was given a 3x5 card and asked to restate the vision she had written during the Academy. The principals did not use the exact words found in the original statement but most used synonyms. One had identified "positive climate" in June and later used the words "loving, supportive environment." One principal had all the original components in the restatement. Three principals had all but one component. Two principals had omitted two components. The most unusual was Principal Ellis, who stated the original vision as she was organizing her thoughts and then wrote a slightly different version. Table 1 shows the number of components for each principal which remained the same over time. Pseudonyms have been given to each principal.

Table 1

Comparison of the Principals' Two Visions

Number of Components in Vision

Principal	Number at Academy	Number during interview	Number same
Allen	3	3	3
Brown	2	4	2
Cotton	4	4	3
Derby	4	3	3
Ellis	5	4	2
Foster	3	3	1
Gage	4	5	4

Five of the principals could be said to have identified essentially the same vision during the interview which they had stated in June. Principal Brown had simply clarified her vision by specifying people and methods. Only one principal had a different emphasis in the two statements. Her first vision focused on curriculum and teaching strategies and the later one emphasized the affective domain. As she explained, she felt she was achieving her vision to improve the instruction and curriculum, and now needed to work on school climate. She indicated that she may not have articulated that vision to her teachers as yet, so they were more likely to be aware of her emphasis on instruction.

Teachers were surveyed at the time of the interview. A brief explanation of the Principals' Academy and a definition of vision were given to supplement the instructions on their response sheet. The teachers were instructed to state in one or two sentences what they believed was their principal's vision. These statements were then compared to the principal's second vision statement by preparing a matrix to display which teacher identified which components. Percentages were computed to demonstrate the degree to which the staff was able to perceive the various components of the principal's vision. (see Table 2)

Table 2

Percentage of Teachers Who Identified
Components of Their Principal's Vision

Principal	Allen	Brown	Cotton	Derby	Ellis	Foster	Gage
Component							
A	26	64	68	63	24	46	39
B	81	64	43	22	48	46	39
C	8	43	79	0	12	0	54
D	n/a	57	54	n/a	48	n/a	39
E	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	12

There were differences in how each principal's staff perceived her vision. The staffs of Principals Brown and Cotton had the highest percentages for all of their components although Principal Allen had the highest percentage for a single component. Principal Gage had the next highest for all components followed by Principal Ellis. The staffs of Principals Derby and Foster were aware of two of the components but could not identify the third. The component which was identified by Principal Allen's staff related to student achievement while her component on staff morale was not identified; in fact, several comments were made which indicated that some teachers felt she was not

concerned about staff morale. The component which Principal Gage's staff had difficulty naming related to her emphasis on the individual child, while Principal Ellis' staff was unaware of her desire for total involvement by all groups in the school and community.

It was of interest to determine not only **which** components were perceived, but **how many** components were perceived by the teachers. (see Table 3)

Table 3

Number of Components	Number and Percent of Teachers Who Identified 0 - 5 Components						
	Principals						
	A, n = 27	B, n = 14	C, n = 29	D, n = 32	E, n = 33	F, n = 24	G, n = 26
	n %	n %	n %	n %	n %	n %	n %
0	4 15	0	1 4	11 34	8 24	6 25	3 12
1	16 59	3 21	2 7	15 47	11 33	14 58	7 27
2	7 26	5 36	12 43	6 19	9 27	4 17	11 42
3	0	5 36	12 43	0	5 15	0	2 8
4	N/A	1 7	1 4	N/A	0	N/A	3 12
5	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0

If the principals were ranked according to the percentage of teachers who could identify two or more components of their visions, Principals Cotton and Brown would again be first with 90 and 79 percent. Principals Gage and Ellis would follow with 62 and 42 percent respectively. Principals Allen, Derby and Foster would fall in the bottom of the rankings with 26, 19 and 17 percent. Principals Derby, Foster and Ellis had a large percentage of teachers who could not identify one component of their visions. Principals Allen and Gage had a smaller number who lacked this perception.

The second area that was examined centered on the strategies or activities used by principals and identified by teachers. Other researchers have analyzed principal activities in relation to the functions of organizing and supporting; training; counseling; monitoring; external communication; dissemination and expressing/responding to concerns (Hord, Huling, and Stiegelbauer (1983); Stevens and Marsh, 1987). Blumburg and Greenfield (1986) identified three functions: organization and general management of the school; supervision of instruction and staff development; and interpretation of the work of the school to the immediate school community. The strategies employed by the principals in these cases evolved into slightly different categories. The principals felt that the staff would perceive their visions through the **programs** which they promoted, the way they **organized** the school and the **staff activities** which they designed. Four of them felt that the **instructional matters** they emphasized and the **communication skills** they employed would make a difference. Only one principal mentioned specific **personal characteristics** which she thought would aid in staff awareness of her vision. The principals identified six to eleven strategies with most identifying eight strategies. All principals except Principal Derby identified specific programs as strategies. All principals identified strategies in the category of organization. Principals Cotton and Derby listed strategies in three categories, and Principal Gage listed strategies in five categories. The remaining four principals had strategies in four categories.

Teachers' responses for each principal were entered on computer and arrayed in a matrix according to categories. Programs were defined to mean any schoolwide plan which was more than a single activity. Reward programs, discipline programs, math programs are typical of the listings in this category. Organization referred to such items as schedules, presence of management teams and rules. Staff activities included items such as in-services, meetings and social functions. Instruction included strategies such as whole group instruction for reading, lesson plans, and teaching strategies. Communication meant written and oral communication as well as modeling. Personal characteristics included items such as attitude, smiles a lot, and has a listening ear. The last two categories tend to overlap. Principals differ in how they communicate according to their personality, so there is a great degree of relatedness; however, an attempt was made to separate the two, i.e., technique from person.

There was a difference in the number of strategies listed by each staff. Fifty percent or more of the staffs of Principals Brown, Cotton, Ellis, and Gage listed four or more strategies, while the other three staffs listed three or more. The first group simply had more examples to list. Time was held constant for all groups.

There was a difference in the category responses between those staffs who perceived the principal's vision and those who did not. The staffs who perceived the visions listed more responses in the program, organization and staff activities categories as well as communication and personal characteristics. Their responses in those categories closely matched the principals' lists. The staffs which had difficulty stating their principals' visions had few or no responses in the program, organization and staff activities categories. Their responses were overwhelmingly in the communication and personal characteristics categories.

In all factors examined in the cases, Principals Brown and Cotton were the most constant in the implementation of their visions, and their visions were more clearly perceived by

their teachers. The teachers identified the same strategies as the principals. Principals Derby and Foster were communicating different visions than they stated, and teachers were unsure or in disagreement as to their visions. The teachers did not identify the strategies indicated by the principals but relied on the communication efforts and personal characteristics of the principals to ascertain their visions.

Discussion

Vision and the strategies principals use to communicate the vision to the staff have received considerable attention in the literature. In these cases I sought to investigate the constancy of principals' visions, the degree to which teachers perceived the visions, and the congruence between strategies identified by principals and those identified by teachers. I was interested in factors which seemed to affect the degree to which the principals were able to enhance the perceptions of their staffs.

The visions of most of the principals were stable and remained constant over several months. This could be attributed to the fact that the seven principals were mature individuals with strong personal beliefs and could be described as competent administrators. While at the Principals' Academy, they had demonstrated enthusiasm, both through their discussions and planning, for improving the educational opportunities at their schools. They completed the preacademy profile and wrote a plan for improving their schools. To use an old-fashioned term, they could be said to be "dedicated" educators. In addition to my direct observation, staff comments on the survey were generally positive and indicated that the principals were viewed with respect.

Even though the principals were competent, there was a difference in the degree to which they were able to communicate their visions. Brown and Cotton were extremely successful. Allen, Ellis, and Gage were moderately successful and Derby and Foster had limited success. The discussion will focus on the factors which seemed to affect the degree to which these competent principals were successful in communicating their visions to their staffs.

Several factors did not seem to contribute to these differences. Experience as a principal seemed not to have an effect. This could be attributed to the fact that the women had extensive educational experience and that the most experience any of them

had as a principal was three years. Possession of advanced degrees was not a factor possibly because all had a master's degree or above and all the principals were active in informal educational training opportunities. The number of teachers in each school was similar except in the case of Brown who had a very small faculty so no differences were noted for faculty size. The grade level of the teachers also did not contribute to the differences.

There are several factors or commonalities which appear to explain the differences in perception. These relate to the communication skills of the principals, their personal characteristics, the plans they developed, and the implementation of those plans.

Principals who used a variety of communication strategies to tell the same story had greater success articulating their visions. Even through communication strategies were not identified by most of the principals as being specific ways that teachers would perceive their visions, the teachers listed many in their responses. They noted things such as personal notes, comments in the hall, announcements over the intercom, and statements made during evaluation conferences as ways they understood their principals' visions. One of the methods mentioned most often was modeling. Teachers kept referring to the "actions" of the principals. The staffs of Cotton and Derby were the ones who noted communication techniques far more than the others; yet Cotton's staff knew her vision while Derby's did not know hers. The difference between the two was that Cotton was communicating the vision she had stated and Derby was communicating a vision that was not congruent with her statement of vision.

The personal characteristics of the principal had a strong impact on the vision which was perceived by the staff. The two principals who seemed to operate in a reactive manner had staffs who relied most heavily on personal characteristics to determine vision. In the absence of consistently applied strategies, personal characteristics may take on greater importance as the teacher tries to comprehend what the principal considers important

and wants to achieve. Quite possibly, the teachers instinctively know that the personal characteristics of the principal provide an image of his/her values. In all cases personal characteristics were identified by teachers, but in the most successful cases the characteristics became a backup or support to other strategies.

Some principals were not communicating the vision they wanted to achieve. Derby had 34 percent of her faculty who could not name one component. The vision her faculty had perceived was one which centered around the behavior of the students. They felt discipline was the most important aspect of her vision. She also conveyed that idea in her discussion during the interview and during a tour of the grounds. She may not have explained or demonstrated what she believed was the link between good discipline and her vision.

Allen was aware that the teachers may have perceived only a portion of her vision, that which focused on task. She did not feel that the teachers would know that their welfare was important to her. She was correct. The teachers indicated their dissatisfaction with the climate of their environment. She had wanted to balance 'busy' with 'happy' but had not been able to do so. She had been hired with the expectation that she would improve the instruction of the school and the accountability of the teachers. As a beginning principal she was focusing on that task and "learning the ropes" of managing a school so she had not attended to teacher morale.

Two of the three components in Foster's vision statements were changed in the six months which elapsed between them. The teachers were still focused on the old vision and were unaware of her new focus. During the interview she said she did not regularly provide a rationale for her decisions, but assumed that her teachers would comprehend why certain actions were necessary. She also believed that if she were responsible for the discipline in the school, the teachers could concentrate on teaching; therefore, she had not involved them in discussions which would have revealed her interest in improving the climate of the school. She had accepted that charge.

The principals who were communicating their vision had developed a plan in which the vision and strategies to achieve that vision were tightly linked. Principals who had a well-developed plan with strategies which were consistent with their visions were more likely to implement the plan. Brown and Cotton had developed strategies which supported each component of their vision. For example, one of Cotton's components was "to celebrate growth." She had designed a "writer of the month" program and a principal's assembly for recognizing student accomplishments in several areas. Teachers were also encouraged to celebrate their successes. Each of her other components had several strategies which were designed to develop or sustain an idea expressed in her vision. Brown, in her quest for a "supportive environment," designed and promoted many activities which rewarded teachers and students for a wide variety of achievements. Principals who were less successful had a general plan and activities which were somewhat related but which were not sequential. They had been unable to analyze the task in such a way that strategies flowed together and enhanced one another. Without a strong plan they reverted to a reactive stance of dealing with problems and establishing programs. They were focusing on everything and yet nothing. They had a potpourri approach to managing and leading the school.

The type of strategies used and the relatedness of the strategies had an effect of the communication of vision. The type of strategy used had an important effect on the communication of vision. A "big event" whereby a common experience is shared and a common language established was clearly more successful as reported by the principals and their staffs. Brown designed a work session incorporating cooperative learning techniques during which her staff brainstormed ideas for the focus of the school. The entire group then arrived at a vision for the school, a mission statement, and a slogan. Brown uses the slogan as she designs new strategies to sustain and deepen the thrust of the vision. Many of her staff not only listed the work session strategy but described it in detail. Cotton used a retreat as her focusing and language building exercise. All staff,

classified and professional, were involved. The emphasis was on how to build self-esteem and develop a positive climate. This activity was listed by a large segment of her staff as the means for their awareness of her vision. In each case the principal began school with an activity which was a common experience for all teachers, used a common language, and developed a consensus as to the outcomes they were trying to achieve. The less successful principals had not integrated their strategies so that they were reinforcing one another. Each strategy seemed to stand alone. Their teachers gave scattered responses with little consensus of agreement. Each teacher had perceived a different version of the vision which seemed to be the result of independent interactions with the principal.

The principals for whom "dailiness" was an important aspect of their plans communicated their visions more effectively. Brown's daily emphasis on the reward programs and frequent use of the school slogan increased her staff's knowledge of her vision. Cotton had extensive communication strategies which kept the focus on her vision. She also was noted by her staff as modeling the vision and emphasizing the vision through statements. Ellis, too, stressed communication on a daily basis. She also used organizational structure to promote her vision. For example, teachers perceived the school team approach as being a key strategy in implementing her vision. By designing the decision making structure to promote her vision, the ideas of her vision permeated the school on a daily basis. These findings support researchers who have suggested dailiness as a strategy to increase the perception of vision. Manasse (1986) says "that principals use small, mundane daily tasks and interactions, that leadership involves the infusion of routine activities with meaning and vision." Dwyer (1984) has found attending to the vision through daily activities enhances the development of a shared vision.

Principals who articulated their vision through the programs they supported appeared to increase the percentage of teachers who perceived their visions. The staffs of Brown,

Cotton, and Ellis listed specific programs such as POPS, Rewards and parent involvement. Only minimal mention was made of programs by the staffs of Allen and Derby. In Derby's case, this was quite accurate as she also did not mention any specific programs when she listed her strategies.

A principal may be involved in so many activities so that there is not clear focus. So many things were either initiated or supported by some principals that the teachers did not identify common strategies. The principals were trying to meet all needs and not concentrating on activities which supported their visions. They were operating as if they lacked vision in which case Manasse says "it is likely that the activities of each person, each day, and each year are seen as separate, no common sense of purpose or priorities, no vision to guide the decisions and little effort to create systems or symbols to articulate, communicate, or explicate the vision. Decisions and activities in such an organization may contradict each other and send contradictory messages— inconsistency." Teachers in such an organization often try to determine the 'mood' of the principal before discussing requests or problems with him/her.

What are the implications for practice? Of course, principals who are interested in communicating their visions could use the factors indicated as a guide when planning their activities for the year. These cases suggest that knowing the guidelines may not be adequate. I agree with Greenfield (1986) that due to the social nature of schools and to the often conflicting standards of what constitutes "good" practice, principals require moral imagination and interpersonal competence. At present these skills are learned in a haphazard, informal manner. Greenfield suggests that graduate programs provide formal opportunities to develop these skills. I agree. The principals I examined had been trained traditionally and had not really thought beyond the managing component of their work. These principals needed the opportunity to reflect on their beliefs and what they wanted to accomplish as principal. Principals need a formal experience to develop moral

imagination as well as Manasse's four types of vision. Principals need to be challenged to imagine what could be. They need to have the opportunity to examine their organizational visions in light of their future and personal visions. This raises a fascinating question. We know we can train managers for efficiency; but can we train and inspire leader's for effectiveness?

Conclusion

Having a vision for a school or district may be common among administrators but how many times have we watched as good intentions, ideas, or programs failed because the administrator was unable to communicate that vision to the staff. There was communication but no meaning. There were languages but not a common one. When organizations experience difficulty, how often do we attribute it to a misunderstanding or breakdown in communication?

According to Bennis and Nanus (1984, page 39), "all organizations depend on the existence of shared meanings and interpretations of reality, which facilitate coordinated action. The actions and symbols of leadership frame and mobilize meaning." How to do this is one of the puzzling challenges facing administrators today. These cases suggest that some strategies may impart more meaning to communication than others. Principals who were successful began with a plan which included strategies which were tightly linked to the outcomes they desired. The strategies within that plan began with a big event to build common experiences and language. There was a definite focus and a dailiness to the strategies. The principals modeled their beliefs through all their statements and actions. They had personal characteristics which supported their visions and enabled the teachers to perceive them. They also seemed to have a greater commitment to their beliefs and visions. In summary, they had integrated their beliefs and actions in a consistent manner, and they exhibited strong convictions.

Even though some of the principals were more successful than others, there is no way of knowing if they would be successful in another setting. Each school was treated as a separate case study; and even though some constraints or barriers were noted, they were not considered to be the overriding factors in the results obtained by the principals. Another limitation is that the selection of the principals was based on specific criteria and not random sample. The most important question is what difference does communicating vision mean to the achievement of students? No attempt was made to examine this issue, but the two most successful principals alluded to student success. Even though the results of each case cannot be generalized to all principals and staffs, examination of the commonalities of the cases does begin to illuminate the perceptions of staff concerning vision and factors which seem to enhance that perception.

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